

School Program Tips

PLEASE NOTE: RAIN OR UNSAFE WEATHER CONDITIONS MAY CANCEL THE PROGRAM WITHOUT ADVANCE NOTICE

We will contact the lead teacher a few days before the trip to verify plans and numbers of students and adults. Please follow these guidelines to make your visit to the Museum a success. If there are any changes to your scheduled trip, notify us through our email address: schoolgroups@gmail.com. For last minute changes, call (805) 772-2694, ext. 0, between 10 am and 4:45 pm seven days a week.

If you are running late the day of your visit or need help, please call the cellphone of the docent if that was provided by email, AND call the Museum at 805-772-2694 (select '0' to skip the menu and speak directly to the front desk). If no one is available, wait for the prompt and leave a message, including a phone number. Estimate how late you will be.

Preparing for your visit

- Introduce students to the vocabulary and educational concepts to be presented in the program (refer to the cover letter for the program).
- Assure that parents prepare the students for coastal weather – layers and closed shoes appropriate for the mud. All students should have a light jacket or sweatshirt! **This is necessary all year long.**
- Divide students into groups of 15. Assign the most reliable students to any groups that will not have a teacher. **Do this before getting on the bus! Organizing after arrival takes a lot of valuable time away from the program.**
- Have two - three chaperones for each 15 students and assign them in advance, so that when you leave the bus children and adults are ready to go!
- Have a name tag for each student and chaperone. Pass them out before getting on the bus.
- Plan your own alternative activities and additional chaperones for any pre-school children, if they must accompany your group. Our outdoor walks are not appropriate for children in strollers. Our program content is designed for grades 2 and above. We will divide multi-grade groups into smaller groups by grade level.
- Instruct students AND chaperones on our behavior code (see below).
- Check your estimated arrival time at the museum. Allow for road construction delays. **Please call if you are running late.** If you are traveling from the Central Valley, allow time for a rest stop before arrival.
- Please have students leave cell phones, cameras, iPods, and other electronic devices at home (one camera is sufficient for group photos, which should be limited). Ask adult chaperones to put their phones on "vibrate," so that they can view messages if there are emergencies but the program will not be interrupted.
- Bring anti-bacterial wipes or waterless soap for younger students.

- 5 -6 picnic tables are available at the Museum. Larger groups may wish to move to another park for lunch. To reserve picnic space in the day use area of Morro Bay State Park, close to the Museum, without charge, call the kiosk at the park 48 hours before your trip: (805) 772-7434. **An alternate park for large groups is Bayshore Bluffs Park:** <http://www.morro-bay.ca.us/372/Bayshore-Bluffs-Park>

Upon arrival

- Buses may drop students off at the far end of the upper Museum parking lot. Then park either at the Marina parking lot below the Museum (away from the Bayside Café), or in the gravel parking lot at the bottom of the north Museum driveway, adjacent to the golf course. The driver may return to the upper parking lot at the end of the tour for pick-up.
- **Please plan to finish snacks before the program start time!**
- Reiterate expectations for behavior before leaving the bus and clarify how adults will help. **Teachers and other adults are expected to stay with their designated small groups during the entire program.**

Assure that students and chaperones are in their small groups of 15. Meet the docents at the front door of the bus. Introduce the lead teacher.

If students will visit the Nature Store at the end of the program, please plan **only 10 in the store at a time**; space is very limited. Ask 2 chaperones to assist in the store and the others with students to wait outside. Children must calculate and add sales tax to the sticker price. Help them be ready to buy something they can afford before they get to the cash register.

Behavior code for students

- Listen when a docent or someone else is talking.
- Stay on the trails. Walk; don't run. Use indoor voices inside the Museum.
- Be careful not to disturb things when you pick up rocks, plants and animals, including those in tide pools. Put things back approximately where you found them (they are in their homes/habitats). Leave everything as it was before you came.
- Be considerate in the restrooms; please help keep them clean. Throw paper towels in the **waste basket**. Boys, please raise toilet seat. Wash hands.

Behavior code for chaperones (also see Expectations for Chaperones document):

- **Serve as a role model for the students.** Limit cell phone use to emergencies. Put your phones on "vibrate."
- Position yourself among the students and actively help maintain a good environment for learning. Require students who are having trouble following the behavior code to stand quietly beside you until the group moves to the next destination.

THANK YOU!